

**U.S. & Virginia Government  
Brentsville District High School  
Mr. MacDonald  
Curriculum Overview**

Parents and Students,

You will find below the state standards and list of topics in our course of study this year. I will be posting enrichment activities for students to work through/review if they wish. Please let me know if you have any questions.

**Part A.** *Course material covered August 26, 2019 to March 12, 2020*

<b>Material Covered</b>	<b>Approximate Date</b>
Introduction to Government [Includes political philosophies and concepts of government]	August to September
The Constitution	September to October
Federal System	October to November
Knowledge of local, state, national elections	October to November
Organization and powers of the national government	December to March
Knowledge of civil liberties	November to March
Knowledge of economic systems	February to March
Thoughtful and effective participation in civic life	August to March

**Part B.** *Unit titles August 26, 2019 to March 12, 2020*

- Unit 1: Introduction to Government and the Origins of American Government
- Unit 2: Federalism and the Constitution
- Unit 3: Politics, the Election Process, and Responsible Citizenship
- Unit 4: The Executive Branch
- Unit 5: The Legislative Branch (introduced March 11-13, not completed)

**Part C.** *Specific State Standards covered from August 26, 2019 to March 12, 2020..*

GOVT.1 The student will demonstrate mastery of the social studies skills responsible citizenship requires, including the ability to

- a) analyze primary and secondary source documents;
- b) create and interpret maps, diagrams, tables, charts, graphs, and spreadsheets;
- c) analyze political cartoons, political advertisements, pictures, and other graphic media;

- d) distinguish between relevant and irrelevant information;
- e) evaluate information for accuracy, separating fact from opinion;
- f) identify a problem, weigh the expected costs and benefits and possible consequences of proposed solutions, and recommend solutions, using a decision-making model;
- g) select and defend positions in writing, discussion, and debate.

GOVT.2 The student will demonstrate knowledge of the political philosophies that shaped the development of Virginia and United States constitutional government by

- a) describing the development of Athenian democracy and the Roman republic;
- b) explaining the influence of the Magna Carta, the English Petition of Rights, and the English Bill of Rights;
- c) examining the writings of Hobbes, Locke, and Montesquieu;
- d) explaining the guarantee of the “rights of Englishmen” set forth in the charters of the Virginia Company of London;
- e) analyzing the natural rights philosophies expressed in the Declaration of Independence;
- f) examining George Mason’s Virginia Declaration of Rights, Thomas Jefferson’s Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom, and James Madison’s leadership role in securing adoption of the Bill of Rights by the First Congress.

GOVT.3 The student will demonstrate knowledge of the concepts of democracy by

- a) recognizing the fundamental worth and dignity of the individual;
- b) recognizing the equality of all citizens under the law;
- c) recognizing majority rule and minority rights;
- d) recognizing the necessity of compromise;
- e) recognizing the freedom of the individual.

GOVT.4 The student will demonstrate knowledge of the Constitution of the United States by

- a) examining the ratification debates and The Federalist;
- b) identifying the purposes for government stated in the Preamble;
- c) examining the fundamental principles upon which the Constitution of the United States is based, including the rule of law, consent of the governed, limited government, separation of powers, and federalism;
- d) illustrating the structure of the national government outlined in Article I, Article II, and Article III;
- e) describing the amendment process.

GOVT.5 The student will demonstrate knowledge of the federal system described in the Constitution of the United States by

- a) explaining the relationship of the state governments to the national government;
- b) describing the extent to which power is shared;
- c) identifying the powers denied state and national governments;
- d) examining the ongoing debate that focuses on the balance of power between state and national governments.

GOVT.6 The student will demonstrate knowledge of local, state, and national elections by

- a) describing the organization, role, and constituencies of political parties;
- b) describing the nomination and election process;
- c) examining campaign funding and spending;
- d) analyzing the influence of media coverage, campaign advertising, public opinion polls, and Internet-based communications on elections;
- e) examining the impact of reapportionment and redistricting on elections;
- f) identifying how amendments extend the right to vote;
- g) analyzing voter turnout;
- h) evaluating the degree to which interest groups influence political life;
- i) participating in simulations of local, state, and/or national elections.

GOVT.7 The student will demonstrate knowledge of the organization and powers of the national government by

- a) examining the legislative, executive, and judicial branches;
- b) analyzing the relationships among the three branches in a system of checks and balances;
- c) examining the ways individuals and groups exert influence on the national government.

GOVT.11 The student will demonstrate knowledge of civil liberties and civil rights by

- a) examining the Bill of Rights, with emphasis on First Amendment freedoms;
- b) analyzing due process of law expressed in the 5th and 14th Amendments;
- c) explaining selective incorporation of the Bill of Rights;
- d) exploring the balance between individual liberties and the public interest;
- e) explaining every citizen's right to be treated equally under the law.

GOVT.17 The student will demonstrate knowledge of personal character traits that facilitate thoughtful and effective participation in civic life by

- a) practicing trustworthiness and honesty;
- b) practicing courtesy and respect for the rights of others;
- c) practicing responsibility, accountability, and self-reliance;
- d) practicing respect for the law;
- e) practicing patriotism;
- f) practicing financial responsibility.

GOVT.18 The student will understand that thoughtful and effective participation in civic life is characterized by

- a) obeying the law and paying taxes;
- b) serving as a juror;
- c) participating in the political process;
- d) performing public service;
- e) keeping informed about current issues;
- f) respecting differing opinions in a diverse society;
- g) practicing personal and fiscal responsibility.